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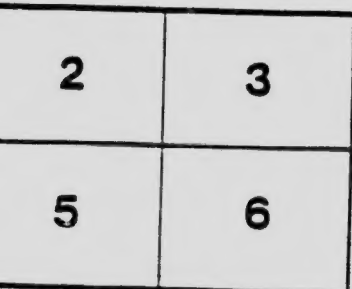
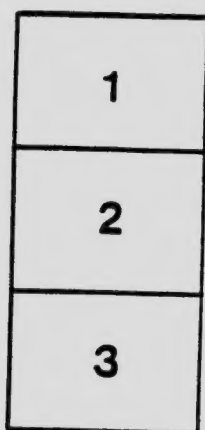
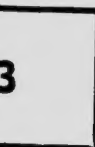
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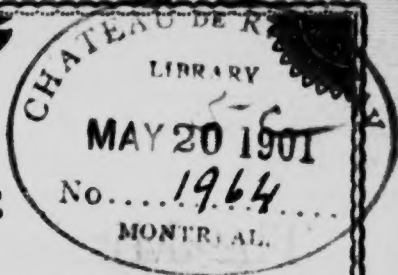
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# MISSION AND COMMISSION

OF THE

CHURCH,

— BY —

REV. A. T. PIERSON, D.D.,

PHILADELPHIA.

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"The King's business requires *haste*."

"Here am *I*, send *me*."

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# The Mission and Commission of the Church,

— BY —

Rev. A. T. PIERSON, D.D.,  
PHILADELPHIA.

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[Copied from "*The Missionary Review of the World*," by permission of the author, and sent out in the King's Name.]

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One of Dr. Guthrie's rules for preaching was :  
"Mind the three 'P's' : *Proving, Painting, Persuad-  
ing*. In other words, address in every discourse the  
reason, the imagination, and the heart."

Of the "*painting*" we are to be not a little on  
our guard. The art that seeks to adorn the truth  
sometimes sacrifices it, by giving to it false features  
or tints : what may be fitting in the department of  
illustration misleads when it invades that of pure  
demonstration or definition. Here the one law is  
rigid exactness. Burke used to say that the words  
of a sentence are the feet on which it walks ; to  
change one word, to shorten or lengthen it, or alter  
its place in the sentence, may change the whole  
course of the sentence itself.

In some things, accuracy is so indispensable that  
a hair's-breadth distinction may be vital, as in as-

tronomical calculations the minutest fraction of an inch must be marked by the micrometer. For a soldier it is of the first importance to understand his "orders"; and for an ambassador, both to apprehend and comprehend his "instructions." The church is a militant body and at the same time an embassy, or, as Leland would say, an embassy. Too much pains, therefore, cannot be taken to get clear conceptions of the orders and instructions of our Captain and King.

In this article we propose to begin at the beginning—to go back to first principles. If there be any misconceptions of the Mission and Commission of the church, in respect to the world's evangelization, here is the point at which to make our corrections, adjust the variations of our compass, and start anew. The four Gospels, at their close, present our Lord's last command from four points of view; taken together, it is like a building presented with a four-fold projection. In some respects these various versions of our Lord's great commission agree; in others they differ, but it is like the discord of the seventh, that leads to harmony; their differences supplement and complement each other. For convenience of comparison, we place them side by side.

MATTHEW.	MARK.	LUKE.	JOHN.
Go ye therefore and teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, etc.	Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, etc.	That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations; and ye are witnesses of these things.	As my Father hath sent me even so send I you. These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, etc.

Our accepted version fails to convey the exact force of the original. For example, Matthew uses a peculiar word — (*μαθητευσατε*) — which is rendered perfectly neither by the word "teach" nor by the word "disciple;" the former means too little, the latter means too much. Another word used by our Lord, a little later in these farewell instructions — (*διδασκουντες*) — is properly translated "teaching," for it refers to a fuller didactic training of those who believe and so become disciples; it contemplates the more perfect equipment of converts, their thorough knowledge of all the commands of Jesus, and their preparation for service. But that first word looks to no such didactic process. It marks a swifter movement, a briefer proclamation. Christ urges on His heralds—they are to sweep round the globe and trumpet forth the good news, then when converts have been gathered, he would have them taught the way of God more perfectly.

Our mistake is fundamental and initial if we confuse and confound preaching and teaching, evangelization and indoctrination. The first thing to be done is to peal out the joyous tidings of salvation. Men are asleep, dead in sin: they must be aroused, awakened. When a house is on fire, a ship is on a rock, a pestilence is raging or an avalanche is falling, we cannot wait to give minute instructions. We need the clarion blast of Gabriel's trump—"escape for thy life!" Then, when the peril is past, we can take time for whatever else is needful, to provide for other wants or guard against other risks. So the herald must precede the teacher; the

evangelist prepares for the catechist, Paul first, then Priscilla and Aquila.

That word in Matthew (*μαθητευσατε*) is not adequately translated, "disciple," or "make disciples." This means too much. Only He who can "forgive sins" can "make a disciple." We may "go" and "preach the gospel," we may become heralds, evangelists; but when we have done our best and utmost, we may be constrained, like the great messianic herald of old, to cry: "Lord who hath believed our report! And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed!"

That word we are discussing does not imply any *necessary effectiveness*. In classic Greek it means to give instruction such as a pupil needs; it is close of kin to another word (*μαρθάνω*) which means "to learn." As used by our Lord it can scarcely be rendered "disciple," for, though we may gather disciples out of the nations, we cannot "*disciple the nations*" themselves. So to render obliges us to carry the same literalism further and place our Lord in the absurd position of bidding us also to "*baptize the nations!*" There are some who think that this word does not refer to the first stage—preaching the gospel,—but to the second, training disciples; and that our Lord is here commissioning his church to gather converts from all peoples, and then baptize and fully instruct them. However this be, if we look at the four Gospels jointly, we shall see that one thought is uppermost; we are to go into all the world and everywhere publish the tidings. If Matthew's words leave us in doubt, Mark, Luke and John dispel it. As they report

Christ's words, they are unequivocal. "Go!"—"proclaim the gospel"—"Repentance and remission of sins" to be "proclaimed in His name among all nations." "Even so send I you." "These things are written that ye might believe"—"and believing have life through His name." And in the opening of the Acts, Luke adds a fifth version: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me, unto the uttermost part of the earth."

We often carelessly say that the church is commissioned "to convert the world." The phrase is not scriptural, and we fear it is at least misleading. We may insure *contact*, but we cannot assure *conversion*; and if we are powerless to effect it, we are not responsible for it. The use of this word, convert, and its equivalents in the Bible, is very significant. Often as it occurs it is generally used passively or intransitively. "Shall *be* converted,"\* "lest they convert"†—or turn, etc. In Acts xxvi. 18, a proper grammatical construction compels us to render intransitively, "that *they may turn about*," etc. James uses the word transitively, ‡ but he refers to the *reclamation of erring disciples*; "brethren if *any of you* do err from the truth and one convert him," etc. And the change of voice is especially noticeable in Psalm li. 13.

"Then *will I teach* transgressors thy ways;  
And sinners *shall be converted* unto thee."

Here the very distinction is preserved which we would emphasize: we may teach transgressors, but we cannot convert them. Of course conversions

\* Psalm li. 13. † Isaiah vi. 10. ‡ James v. 19, 20.



have followed and will follow the proclamation of the gospel ; but not even the most devoted herald can assure them. We are thus careful to lay down the platform of principles upon which we are to carry on the work of evangelization, because we dare not add to, or subtract from, the exact terms of our divine mission and commission. This is no case of a distinction without a difference. On the contrary, we are persuaded that *upon our thorough acceptance of this Biblical basis hangs the proper prosecution of the whole work of evangelization.* And therefore we now proceed to show *seven vital relations* which such a conception of evangelism bears to the believer's work for souls.

I. *The limits of our commission are the limits of our authority.*

Paul writes: "We are ambassadors for Christ." An ambassador is one who represents another: who acts in the stead of a sovereign. Within the limits of his instructions he carries all the authority of the monarch, the empire, the government, which he represents. But the moment he passes the bounds of those instructions, he transcends also the limits of his authority and may even forfeit his commission. It is therefore vital that we understand our commission in order that we may always act and speak with authority. Here is a whole province in God's universal empire in armed rebellion. We who are believers are sent to offer to every rebel pardon and reconciliation; as though God did beseech by us, to pray them in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God. We are to declare the conditions



of such reconciliation and restoration, but we cannot compel any rebel to lay down his arms and submit to God. Nor is this our province. Our authority is explicit; we are empowered to publish the good tidings throughout the world; there our authority begins and ends. So long as we confine ourselves to that, behind us, backing up our message, stands the whole Godhead! But the moment we begin to think of it as our work to "convert" men, we are tempted to tamper with the gospel, to abate its seeming severity, to make it more attractive; or even to invade the province of the Holy Spirit and seek to move directly upon the unrenewed heart and will.

It is a dangerous business, this trying to induce men to consent to the gospel. Paul refers to this perhaps when he says, "We are not as many who corrupt—(σαπηνισιντες)—adulterate the word of God."\* These kapeloi, or hucksters, tavern-keepers, were notorious for adulterating their commodities, for the sake of large sales and selfish gains. What a temptation to the gospel preacher to soften the severity of the terms, for the sake of winning men! "How much owest thou unto my Lord?" "An hundred measures of oil." "Take thy bill and write fifty." What a snare to the church to accommodate her spiritual standard to the natural heart and become worldly! What a temptation to count converts and justify as legitimate the means by which their number is swelled to new proportions!

Now, be it remembered that, if, even for the sake of drawing men to God, the ambassador adds to or

\* 2 Cor. ii. 17.

diminishes aught from his message, he no longer speaks with authority. Rebels may be induced to yield on our terms or their own terms; but until there is submission *on God's terms* there is no reconciliation! The only way to keep out of the clutch of this subtlest satanic temptation is to keep steadily before us that our work is evangelization rather than conversion. Let us preach the gospel just as our Lord has bidden us, and just as he gave it to us to preach; then we speak with all the authority and power of God behind us. But however much we may yearn over souls, we must keep to our instructions, lest passing them we not only forfeit all authority, but betray the souls we seek to save.

II. *The limits of our commission are the limits also of our responsibility.*

That word, responsibility, is full of awe. How far are we held accountable for the souls of others? When is their blood on our skirts, and when is it no longer required at our hand? To be held to answer for the final loss of one soul is a load that no believer can bear; Paul's exclamation gets thousand-fold emphasis: "Who is sufficient for these things?" But, thank God! it is not so. We need look no further than that gospel in Ezekiel to learn the law of responsibility.\* Originally God alone was responsible, for he only had power to save, or even knowledge of salvation. When He appointed ambassadors and committed to them the message, that *transferred responsibility to them*. The

\* Ezekiel xviii., xxxiii.

messenger becomes a mediator: having the good tidings and being commissioned to stand between God and the dying souls of men. Now observe, that from the moment the gospel is fully and faithfully proclaimed, *responsibility is again transferred to the hearer!* In every step and stage of this process and progress, the transfer of knowledge implies the transfer of obligation. The wicked is warned; he may not be won; but the watchman is free of blame.

The moment the gospel herald becomes unduly anxious about its *reception*, he risks forgetting his own work and intruding upon that of the hearer, and of the Holy Ghost. Perhaps he loses courage, boldness, peace. He begins to doubt and distrust not himself only but God. He is mixing up his own responsibility with that of those to whom he speaks. In other words, the herald reproaches himself with the heedlessness of his hearers; the ambassador, with the perversity of His sovereign's foes. No! blessed be God, to discharge our duty, by earnestly and lovingly preaching the gospel, is to be discharged of all further responsibility.

Paul had passion for souls—"great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart"—could wish himself "accursed from Christ, for his brethren." Surely no cold heart, no mere sense of duty, goaded him on. Yet when, at Antioch in Pisidia, those "brethren" "judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life," and even raised persecution against him, he "shook off the dust of his feet," in solemn token that he shook off all responsibility for their condemnation, and departed; and at Miletus he

said to the Ephesian elders, "I take you to record this day that I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God!"

We may be as faithful as Paul, but all we can do at our best will not, of itself, insure one convert or disciple. It will still be true as of him: "Some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not." Some, "ever learning will never come to the full knowledge of the truth." Not a few will become gospel-hardened, which is worse than sin hardened. But Paul's duty was done irrespective of how many believe and obey. The limits of our commission and of our responsibility must coincide; and because conversion is not our commission, for conversion we are not held accountable.

III. *The limits of our commission are the gauge of our success.*

We are constantly tempted by Satan, and by our own carnal hearts, to weigh in human scales and to measure by worldly standards, the results of our work. Not only in the world, but alas! in the church, the satanic spirit is abroad, that dares to ask that supremely selfish question: *Do missions pay?* In this inquiry lurks a latent heresy. It assumes that we are capable of estimating results; still worse, it implies that our estimate of results may lawfully affect our obligation. Both these premises are radically unsound. The tendency is to walk not by faith but by sight, and to judge by appearances, and, because it fosters this tendency, our whole system of statistical returns is mislead-

ing and perniciously liable to abuse. Is a minister of Christ to be judged by the number of converts he gathers in a given year or the amount of money he secures to the Boards?

Away with such standards of success! The most important work upon the famous Eddystone is not visible, even at low tide. For a few hours each day patient workmen labour, anchoring to the rocks those immovable blocks on which rises and rests that symmetrical cone that Smeaton built. That work was slow and is now unseen; yet, but for that work, there would be no "Laus Deo" graven on the face of that beacon which still stands, after 130 years, off Ramhead, "to give light and to save life." It was not the quick explosion at Hell Gate that cleared the channel; but the long underwater toil of miners who wrought out of sight and hearing. The first fourteen years at Tahiti passed without one convert or sign of success; yet on the work of those fourteen years rose the structure of Polynesian missions! There were nearly fifty years of fruitless toil among the Telugus before the "Lone Star" at Ongole blazed forth like the sun; but then in one year there were ten thousand converts, and the Lone Star became a constellation. Isaiah's barren ministry prepared the way for Paul's fruitful evangelism. Captain Allen Gardiner's death at Tierra del Fuego was the burial of a seed that in the next generation bore such fruit that even Charles Darwin declared that he "could not have believed that all the missionaries in the world" could have wrought such results.

God leaves none of his faithful servants to spend

their strength for naught. Our work is His work ; it is from Him, for Him, with Him, in Him ; and hence there can be no failure, but we must never attempt to gauge our success by apparent results. If faithful, our reward is sure, though "all day long" we stretch forth pleading hands "to a disobedient and gainsaying people." The Master Himself was "despised and rejected of men;" "he came unto his own possessions and his own people received him not." "The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord." But the fact is we are incapable of measuring our own success. To estimate results requires omniscience, omnipresence, eternity. In all work there are three stages: preparatory, intermediate, ultimate; the preparatory is often the most tedious and prolonged, where the ultimate is most glorious. Man, noblest of animals, is most helpless at first and slowest to develop. The fields of the world that have yielded the greatest harvests have been longest in the preliminary tillage. God's true missionary goes where He sends him and does what He bids him; and he succeeds, though all he may do is to plow up the hard ground and gather out the stones and leave a fair field for the sower. And in God's eyes many a man who, by the armful or wagon-load, brings sheaves to the garner, is only reaping from others' sowing.

IV. *The limits of our instructions set limits to our field and work.*

Christ says: "The field is the world," and no part of it is to be left untilled and unsown. If we

wait to "convert our hearers, we shall never put our working force into the whole field. *Just here has been the great mistake of the church even in her missionary era!* Christ's principle is **DIFFUSION**: our practice is **CONCENTRATION**. We emphasize conversion, while He emphasizes evangelization; and so our human philosophy counsels us *to convert as we go, and so increase the converting force*. The effect is that we keep tilling a few little corners of the world-field, sowing them over and over, until the soil loses power to yield, while tracts a thousand miles square have never yet borne the tread of the sower! Even disciples are asking, "Are there not heathen enough at home, that we send the flower of our youth to the ends of the earth?"

But who was He who said, "Go ye into all the world?" There will always be heathen at home, and in our churches too—the worst sort of heathen, who have heard so long without heeding that the word will never bear fruit in their hearts. No soil in equatorial Africa is half so hard for the gospel-plow as the respectable sinners in our home congregations. London has to-day a thousand more missionaries than the whole church supports on the foreign field; and so long as we hold that our commission is to convert men rather than to preach the gospel to all men, this radical error will confront us in our methods. But so soon as we accept our mission and commission as world-wide evangelization, leaving to our Commander the time and the way of the final world-wide victory, we shall see the folly of our philosophy and be guided by the wis-



dom of God. Then we shall spread our force over the whole field ; we shall cease to compare respective fields, and mass our forces upon those which promise the quickest, largest harvests; we shall simply obey our Master and leave all the rest with Him.

We write with calm pen, when we write down the mistake of the church as *radical*. It is our solemn conviction that we must change our emphasis from *converting* men to *evangelizing* them. While we wait for long-tilled fields to bear fruit in converts, other fields, vast and wholly untilled, yield harvest after harvest of death. After nineteen centuries, our labors are practically limited to perhaps one-tenth of the actual world-field. Meanwhile, generation after generation has come upon the stage of human history, and passed into the darkness of the unknown world, in ignorance of the gospel. Since our Lord arose and ascended, not less than fifty such generations, aggregating probably twenty times the present population of the globe, have lived and died. And yet there are nearly a thousand millions now living who have never heard the pure gospel. So long as the church turned all her forces into the home field, the dark ages were upon her; and when she sent forth her heralds to light up the death-shade in lands afar, her own morning began to dawn; and so the last century, which has been the missionary century, has been the century of greatest growth to Christendom itself. Should we multiply the force in foreign fields a hundred-fold, there would be a thousand-fold increase at home.

V. *The limits of our commission set the bounds to our lawful expectation.*

If for the conversion of the world we labor and look, the present prospect is, it must be confessed, somewhat disheartening. The Christian Church has had nineteen centuries as her working-period, and out of 1,500,000,000 of inhabitants, has only about 30,000,000 Protestant church-members. After a century of modern missions, with over one hundred missionary societies, some 300 translations of the Gospels, some 6,000 missionaries in the field, and an annual expenditure of over ten millions of dollars, we have but a million and a half of converts to show. The territory of Brahminism and Buddhism has been invaded, but never pervaded. As yet, Confucianism mocks our efforts, and Islamism defies us at its central strongholds. We are making very slow progress in converting the world; and even "Christian nations" do such unchristian things that they are sometimes, by their traffic in rum and opium, and in the bodies and souls of men, the chief hindrances of the missionary. Meanwhile, the increase of population far outruns us, and leaves our proselytism and propagandism hopelessly in the rear. No wonder the "pessimists" are triumphant.

This is one way of looking at the aspect and prospect. But what if this be the *wrong point of view*? What if our Lord has only commissioned us to go everywhere and preach His gospel, and leave to Him to work His wonders when, and where, and as He will? What if our work be simply to obey His last command—to scatter broadcast, and in

every field, the seed of the Word ; nay, everywhere to bury ourselves as the good seed of the kingdom, content, if so He will, to die and bring forth fruit when we can no longer see it? What if, even in this "evangelistic era," the church is still making the strange mistake of not yet planning and preparing for that world-wide occupation which he enjoined nearly two millenniums ago?

It is not enough to work, or even to work for God and for souls. Only when we work under His direction, and as He directs, do reward and blessing come. Never was mission or commission more clear and emphatic: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." "This gospel must first be preached in all the world for a witness among all nations; and then shall the end come." He who, in his impatience at the "miserable contracting lines of pessimism," says "there is no 'preaching the gospel as a witness,' here," surely forgets that these are the very words in which our Lord Himself announces and defines the work of the present dispensation.

There may be disappointment, even to a disciple, whenever his expectation is based upon an unscriptural foundation. Our wish is often farther, not only to our thought but to our hope. Within the limits of our instructions must we find the entire territory of our assured expectancy. When hope plants her feet upon the promises of God, her standing place is firmer than the eternal hills; and when she plumes her wings with the promises, there is no limit to her upward flight. But only

those expectations ripen into fruition which spring from some seed of His word.

VI. *The limits of our commission set the limits of the Spirit's blessing.*

Only in the way of perfect obedience can be found perfect blessedness. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of love, joy, peace, and power. If we find that we lack confidence and courage in God, contentment in our work, passion for souls, and unction in our message, it may be well to ask, are we in the way of duty? God hath given the Holy Ghost "to them that obey him." To those who "love" him and "keep his words" Christ has promised that mysterious inward revelation of his personal indwelling. It cannot be a matter of little consequence to get a clear, full, exact apprehension of just what our Lord would have us to do.

Both the teaching of the Word and the testimony of the ages unite in this great lesson to the church: that only so far and so fast as the working force is dispersed over the whole field, and the gospel is witnessed unto every nation and every creature, will the last and greatest Pentecost of history be fully realized. The primary question is not one of rival fields, whether "home" or "foreign"; not of saving our great cities or saving our own land. It is primarily a matter of implicit and immediate obedience to Christ. Our mission knows no limits but the limits of the command, which are the limits of the world and of time. So long as one human creature has not yet heard the message, our duty as messengers is not done, however many who have

heard remain yet unconverted. Our Master stands with imperative finger *pointing to unoccupied fields*; and while one such is left, He has not been fully obeyed and the Spirit will not be fully outpoured.

We believe this and therefore we must speak. Though sadly conscious of feebly stemming a tide that with tremendous energy of movement sweeps the other way, we here record our solemn conviction that the church has yet to take up this work of missions in dead earnest. These unoccupied fields will never be taken possession of in Christ's name until the only ground of discrimination between one field and another is their *comparative destitution*. Whether near or far, those whose need is most extreme, and whose ignorance is most appalling, have the first claim. The drift of the day is toward concentration on the most hopeful, and even the nearest fields. Hence remote heathen and degraded pagan peoples are neglected; the question is solely raised whether it be right to blast the very blossoms of our highest Christian civilization in the furnace of African fever; whether it be not waste to send such women as Harriet Newell, Mrs. Grant, Mrs. Judson, Mrs. Gordon, to Oriental pagans and South Sea cannibals; and hundreds of Christians quote with relish the sneer of Dickens, who makes Mrs. Jellyby look past the misery of her own household and neighborhood to sigh over Borioboola Gha!

For a century the Spirit has poured His fullest blessing on families, churches, and schools of the prophets, whence have gone the largest bands of laborers to fields remote. The paradox of modern

church life is this: Apparent depletion ends in richest repletion; the most liberal gifts of men and money to farthest fields are the signal for the most rapid replenishment at home. Here is the key to the paradox: the Holy Spirit rewards obedience. Should we recall the 6,000 foreign missionaries to re-enforce the home-fields, it would bring to those very fields the curse of barrenness. Should we, on the contrary, distribute the whole force equally and impartially, with strict reference to the vast extent and awful need of the whole field, such blessing would come upon fields nearest home as never has been known. Of church life, as of individual life, it is true:

"There is that scattereth and yet increaseth:  
And there is that withholdeth more than is meet,  
But it tendeth to poverty."

VII. *The limits of our commission become the bounds of our satisfaction and joy.*

What is the ultimate ground of our rejoicing? There is a higher, broader basis for our serenity and satisfaction than even the number of souls saved, viz.: that we have *done the will of God*. He who, to Thessalonian converts, wrote: "Ye are our glory, and joy, and crown of rejoicing," wrote also to the Corinthians: "Now thanks be unto God, who at all times leadeth us about in triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the fragrance of the knowledge of him, through us, in every place; for we are a grateful odor of Christ, unto God, *both in those who are being saved and in those who are being lost*,"\* etc.

\* 2 Cor. ii. 14-16.

Here is another paradox, but it contains the deepest philosophy. It is the most emphatic reminder that our joy is not confined to our success in saving souls. Paul was driven out of place after place, persecuted, scourged, imprisoned, stoned and left for dead; but just as truly where he was rejected, as where he was "received as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus," he joyed in God, for he was a steward of the gospel, and "it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." Observe, "*faithful*," not *successful*. He may sow the seed and till the field but cannot assure an abundant crop, or any crop. Some seed Satan's fowl may catch up as soon as sown; other seed may fall on shallow soil or among thorns; but however fruitful or fruitless, whether it yields nothing or an hundred-fold, the faithful sower has the same reward.

No man, whose eye is on apparent victory or seeming success, can unlock Paul's paradox. The gospel proves its divinity in this, that *no hearer can be indifferent to it*. It grapples with his convictions, affections, conscience. It compels consideration and decision, one way or other, and hence every gospel appeal leaves him better or worse. Those who substitute for the gospel something else, and amuse or entertain with intellectual and moral essays, may leave men very much as they find them. But every man who preaches Christ—who reasons of righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come—either lifts men higher or sinks them lower. The gospel must prove either a lever or a load. To hear such truth inevitably softens or hardens, saves or damns. In the vegetable



world the same conditions that so favour growth where life exists—light, heat, moisture, and nutrition—also favor rapid decay where life does not exist or develop. And so the gospel either begets life or breeds death; and proves itself the power of God by the savor of death as truly as by the savor of life.

It is an awful thought but a true one: Every soul that without excuse goes at last into outer darkness, as having heard but not having heeded the gospel, is as truly a proof of the preacher's fidelity and as really a trophy of God's triumph as is a soul saved by repentance and faith. Therefore it is that as we go forth to evangelize the world we rejoice alike in victory and in defeat, for in both alike God is leading us in triumph in Christ. Whether men are saved and send up the fragrance of life; or whether, lost, they send up the stench of death, He will recognize and reward the fidelity of which both the saved and the lost are alike witnesses. This cry of "victory" has long been Satan's device to mislead and discourage God's saints. It tempts us to press on where triumph seems to beckon, and to halt and even retreat where defeat seems to threaten. It tempts us to "number the people" and gauge success by figures; nay, to let down the gospel standard in hopes of easier and quicker victory. It leads an English Canon to set pounds sterling over against the sterling worth of souls, and, because the sums expended seem large and the converts gathered seem few, to cry, like Judas, "To what purpose is this waste?" It betrays us into hopelessness and heartlessness

when our words seem to avail nothing in winning souls, and it has driven not a few workmen from the field altogether because God's blessing seemed withheld from their work.

Let no one therefore tell us that it is a matter of indifference whether we go forth expecting to convert the world, or only to evangelize the nations. Within the limits of our commission we are to find also the limits of whatever else is most vital. Here we find the warrant of our authority, the measure of our responsibility, the standard of our success, the definition of our field and work, the goal of our expectation, the assurance of the Spirit's blessing, and the broad basis of our abiding joy. For victory we are not unduly solicitous; in our seeming defeat and disaster our Lord may find His triumph and success. We may never see victory till the Great Captain Himself appears on the battle-field. All we may be able to do, and all He may give us to do, may be to seize certain strongholds and "hold the fort," till He comes to turn the tide of battle. But in the darkness and the smoke of the conflict, whichever way the issue seems to sway, we are to stand by our guns, and hold fast our flag.

On that mountain in Galilee, Christ the Lord seems still to be standing, and with trumpet tones that echo down the ages, forevermore to be saying:

"ALL POWER IS GIVEN UNTO ME, IN HEAVEN AND IN EARTH"  
THEREFORE

*"Go ye into all the world,  
And preach the gospel to every creature ;*

AND LO ! I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, EVEN UNTO THE END OF THE  
AGE."

## NOTICE.

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